



CHEM-SOLV, INC. SUPERFUND SITE

Cheswold, Kent County, Delaware

June 1999 · U.S. Environmental Protection Agency · Information Update

EPA Completes Construction at Chem-Solv Superfund Site

The potentially responsible parties (PRPs) at the Chem-Solv, Inc. Superfund Site in Cheswold, Kent County have completed construction of the groundwater treatment system. As of April 1999, more than 40 million gallons of contaminated groundwater had been recovered and treated. The groundwater treatment system treats the volatile organic compounds (VOCs)—primarily trichloroethene (TCE)—that contaminated the Columbia aquifer. Since the recovery of contaminated groundwater began, TCE concentrations in the aquifer have declined by 90 percent.

With the contaminated groundwater plume under control, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that the existing groundwater recovery system, which was initially an interim cleanup mea-

sure, provides a permanent remedy for the groundwater contamination. In addition, as of January 1998, all area residents with shallow groundwater wells that could have been affected by the contamination have received wells that tap into a deeper, uncontaminated aquifer.

Construction History

The cleanup began in 1997, after TCE was found in a private water-supply well located immediately down gradient of the former solvent recycling facility at levels 200 times greater than the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) allowable for public drinking-water supplies. To protect area residents, in 1996 and 1998 the PRPs replaced contaminated private wells with wells that tap a deeper, uncontaminated aquifer. The PRPs also replaced six uncontaminated private wells located



The Air Stripper, which is part of the groundwater treatment system, is housed in a commercial garage.

down gradient of the site with deeper wells in January of 1998.

The replacement of the residential wells and the installation of the groundwater recovery and treatment system complete the construction portion of groundwater cleanup. The groundwater treatment will continue until the groundwater cleanup levels are achieved, and EPA will continue to monitor the groundwater to ensure it is safe. ♦



A worker at the site prepares to sample one of the monitoring wells that is used to ensure the cleanup is working.

Chem-Solv Site History

The 1 ½-acre Chem-Solv, Inc. site is located in Cheswold, which has a population of approximately 300. Chem-Solv operated as a small solvent distillation facility from 1982 until 1984. The facility recycled waste solvents by heating the drummed wastes on an electric coil heater and collecting the distilled solvents into separate drums. In 1984, an explosion and fire at the site destroyed the distillation facility. Witnesses observed fluids flowing off a concrete pad and into the soil. After

the fire, the State and PRPs evaluated the Columbia aquifer beneath the site. High concentrations of VOCs—primarily TCE—were found in the aquifer. In 1995, TCE was found in a private water-supply well located immediately down gradient of the former solvent-recycling facility at levels 200 times greater than the MCL. By 1997, the groundwater recovery and treatment system had been constructed and was removing contaminants from the Columbia aquifer. ♦

For More Information...

If you have questions or would like additional information about the site, please contact one of the EPA representatives listed below.

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You may write to Hal or Debra at:

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Administrative Record File

In addition, you can view the Administrative Record file, an official collection of reports, correspondence and other documents that reflect EPA's process of selecting a cleanup plan for a site. You may review the Chem-Solv Administrative Record File at the following information repositories:

EPA Issues ESD for Chem-Solv Site

In June, EPA issued an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) for the Chem-Solv site. Whenever EPA significantly changes part of the cleanup decision outlined in the Record of Decision (ROD), the Agency issues an ESD to explain why the cleanup plan has been changed. The ESD will become part of the Administrative Record file.

As provided by the Chem-Solv ROD, the State is prohibiting the installation of drinking water wells in the contaminated Columbia aquifer at the site via implementation of a Groundwater Management Zone (GWMZ). The Chem-Solv ESD explains that EPA has changed the ROD to remove the requirement for deed restrictions on properties located within the GWMZ.

The 1992 Chem-Solv ROD requires the placement of a notice in the property records of each property located within the GWMZ. This notice would inform present and potential future property owners that the property is located within the GWMZ, where drinking-water supply wells will not be permitted in the shallow Columbia aquifer until EPA determines groundwater cleanup levels have been achieved.

EPA recognizes that such notices become a permanent part of the property record, and can stigmatize the property. Because the shallow drinking-water wells have been replaced with deeper wells and the State will restrict use of the contaminated aquifer until the groundwater cleanup levels have been met, EPA has determined that these notices are not necessary. ❖

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Inside: Information About the Chem-Solv, Inc. Superfund Site



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